



Jeff Nash
Office of Community
Relations
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City
Schools
jnash@chccs.k12.nc.us
919-412-7947

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For Immediate Release

Board Chair Resigns

Margaret Samuels served on Board of Education since 2015

Chapel Hill, NC – Margaret Samuels, Chair of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education, has announced her resignation. Margaret's letter of resignation is included below.

I would like to open by saying how much I love our school district. I love our district for what it is, and what it aspires to be; for its desire to close gaps, and its desire to support all children. That is why we do this work. I have spent many years serving the families and children of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, something that brings me joy and great hope for our future, but I am not a politician, and I have no appetite for political fights that take the attention away from our schools and our children.



These actions have been provoked because a program for children was expanded. The expansion of this program was approved through a democratic process and by a majority board vote. It is a program that I happen to believe expands opportunities for students in our community. Those who opposed the extension of this program are now seeking to change the composition of the board to gain the outcome they desired. It is their democratic right to try to do so.

As you are aware, the board's legal counsel advised that there was no conflict of interest regarding the issues raised in this vote. Nevertheless, since being elected chair, well after the events in question occurred, I have tried to respond to public concerns by working toward board consensus where possible, by ensuring board members had access to professional development and training, and by setting in motion a review of our board's related policies.

The charges leveled at me are baseless and without foundation. However, I have no desire to be a part of anything that takes the focus away from our students. When the behavior of adults is the leading story in any school district—we know we have a problem. The fact that this process may cost our students funds they so desperately need is incredibly disheartening. This is money that would be much better spent paying for a new teacher,

teacher assistants, a new bus, safety improvements, capital needs, or maintenance repairs to school buildings.

Before this effort began, I was already thinking long and hard about whether it was time to make room for those in our community with children now coming up in our system. I know now that to be the case. We should be able to have respectful discourse, and not value winning over everything else. We should be setting an example for our children. Sadly, I suspect many well-intentioned people will look at the way this issue has been contested and conclude that they have no wish to become involved in political discourse in our community, and that is tragic.

For my family and I, it is time to step away. I am taking this action despite being urged to stay on by many friends, parents, teachers, and other elected officials. The support I have felt since this effort began has been overwhelming, and I am very grateful for the generosity of this sentiment. But it is time to let someone else pick up the torch.

This fall, when selecting new board members, I hope our community will ask hard questions of all those up for reelection, and of those standing for election for the first time. I hope that voters will choose candidates who will give of themselves honestly, for the good of the students, as I have tried to do. It is important that the board is held accountable by our entire community, and not just by its loudest voices.

Dr. Baldwin, I also hope the residents of our community will unite behind you and support the tremendous work you are doing in our schools. You and your staff are professional, dedicated and selfless, and true experts in your field. You have closed gaps, improved scores and supported children successfully. There is much work to do, but I know you will accomplish it. I have been proud to try to help where I could.

I will be forever grateful for having had the opportunity to serve. Thank you to the students, teachers, staff and administration of Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools and our community members. You are the reason we do this work.

Effective immediately I resign from the Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools Board of Education.

Thank you,

Margaret Samuels

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Jeff Nash, Executive Director of Community Relations | jnash@chccs.k12.nc.us | 919-967-8211 x28227 | <http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us>